

Listing of the Claims

1. (currently amended) A method of fabricating a preform for use in manufacturing optical waveguide fiber, the method comprising the steps of:

depositing soot onto a substrate to form a soot glass body thereon, the soot body having opposing first and second ends;

removing the substrate from the soot body, thereby forming a centerline hole extending axially ~~therethrough~~ through the soot body from the first end to the second end of the soot body, the centerline hole having two opposing ends disposed at the first and second ends of the soot body, respectively;

inserting a first glass body into the centerline hole at the first end of the soot body, the first glass body comprising deuterated glass ~~plugging at least one end of the centerline hole using at least one other glass body;~~

drying the soot body; and

consolidating the soot body to form a glass preform, ~~wherein the at least other glass body is pre-deuterated.~~

2. (currently amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein a portion of the soot body sinters around and engages the ~~at least one other~~ first glass body during the consolidating step.

3. (currently amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein the ~~consolidating step further comprises~~ opposing ends of the centerline hole are closed during the consolidating step, wherein forming a the glass preform having has a sealed centerline hole.

4. (currently amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein the ~~plugging~~ inserting step further comprises ~~plugging both ends of the centerline hole of the soot body using glass plugs, wherein at least one of the plugs is made of pre-deuterated glass~~ inserting a second glass body into the centerline hole at the second end of the soot body.

5. (currently amended) The method of Claim 4 wherein the second glass body comprises deuterated glass ~~plugging step further comprises inserting plugs into each end of the centerline hole of the soot body, wherein at least one of the plugs is made of pre-~~

~~deuterated glass, and wherein the consolidating step further comprises closing the first and second ends of the centerline hole thereby forming a glass preform having a sealed centerline hole.~~

6. (canceled)

7. (currently amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein the first glass body is deuterated ~~further comprising deuterating the at least one of the glass bodies before the depositing step.~~

8. (currently amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein the first glass body is deuterated ~~further comprising deuterating the at least one of the glass bodies before the inserting step.~~

9. (currently amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein, prior to the depositing step, the substrate is inserted into a tubular glass body, and during the depositing step, a portion of the soot is deposited on the tubular glass body ~~further comprises depositing soot onto a pre-deuterated glass handle.~~

10. (currently amended) The method of Claim 4 9 wherein the tubular glass body comprises deuterated glass ~~depositing step further comprises depositing soot onto a glass handle, and wherein the plugging step further comprises plugging both ends of the centerline hole of the soot body using glass plugs, wherein at least one of the plugs and the handle is pre-deuterated.~~

11. (canceled)

12.(original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising overcladding the glass preform.

13. (original) The method of Claim 12 wherein the overcladding step further comprises depositing soot onto the glass preform.

14. (original) The method of Claim 13 further comprising drying and consolidating the soot deposited on the glass preform.

15. (original) The method of Claim 12 wherein the overladding step further comprises disposing a tube over the glass preform.

16. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method of forming optical fiber ~~Claim 1 further~~ comprising drawing the glass preform of Claim 1 into the optical fiber and deuterating the optical fiber.

17-38. (withdrawn)

39.(new) The method of Claim 4 wherein the second glass body is not deuterated prior to insertion into the centerline hole.

40. (new) The method of Claim 4 wherein the second glass body is deuterated prior to insertion into the centerline hole.

41. (new) The method of Claim 9 wherein the tubular glass body is deuterated prior to the depositing step.

42. (new) A method of fabricating a preform for use in manufacturing optical waveguide fiber, the method comprising the steps of:

depositing soot onto a substrate and onto a deuterated glass body to form a soot body thereon, the soot body having opposing first and second ends;

removing the substrate from the soot body, thereby forming a centerline hole extending axially through the soot body from the first end to the second end of the soot body, the centerline hole having two opposing ends disposed at the first and second ends of the soot body, respectively;

drying the soot body; and

consolidating the soot body to form a glass preform.

43. (new) The method of claim 42 further comprising, after removing the substrate from the soot body and before drying the soot body, inserting a first glass body into the centerline hole at one of the opposing first and second ends of the soot body.

44. (new) The method of claim 43 wherein the first glass body comprises deuterated glass.

45. (new) The method of claim 43 wherein the first glass body is deuterated prior to being inserted into the soot body.

46. (new) The method of claim 43 further comprising, after removing the substrate from the soot body and before drying the soot body, inserting a second glass body into the centerline hole at the other one of the opposing first and second ends of the soot body.

47. (new) The method of claim 46 wherein at least one of the first glass body and the second glass body comprises deuterated glass.

48. (new) The method of claim 46 wherein at least one of the first glass body and the second glass body is deuterated prior to being inserted into the soot body.

49. (new) A method of fabricating a preform for use in manufacturing optical waveguide fiber, the method comprising the steps of:

depositing soot onto a substrate and onto a tubular glass body to form a soot body thereon, the soot body having opposing first and second ends;

removing the substrate from the soot body, thereby forming a centerline hole extending axially through the soot body from the first end to the second end of the soot body, the centerline hole having two opposing ends disposed at the first and second ends of the soot body, respectively;

inserting a first glass body into the centerline hole at the first end of the soot body and inserting a second glass body into the centerline hole at the second end of the soot body;

drying the soot body; and

consolidating the soot body to form a glass preform;

wherein at least one of the tubular glass body, the first glass body, and the second glass body comprises deuterated glass.

50. (new) The method of claim 49 wherein the tubular glass body is deuterated prior to the depositing step, and/or the first glass body is deuterated prior to insertion into the

centerline hole, and/or the second glass body is deuterated prior to insertion into the centerline hole.

51. (new) The method of claim 49 wherein the tubular glass body is disposed at the first end of the soot body.

52. (new) The method of claim 51 wherein at least a portion of the first glass body is disposed within the tubular glass body after inserting the first glass body into the soot body.

53. (new) The method of claim 49 wherein the tubular glass body is disposed at the second end of the soot body.

54. (new) The method of claim 53 wherein at least a portion of the second glass body is disposed within the tubular glass body after inserting the second glass body into the soot body.